

REMARKS

This Amendment is in response to the final Office Action mailed July 15, 2005. Claims 1-4, 6-18, and 20-28 were examined in the Office Action. Claims 1-4, 6-18, and 20-28 were rejected. Claims 1, 7-8, 10-12, 16, and 25 have been amended to clarify nonobviousness. No new claims have been added. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and examination in view of the following remarks.

Substance of Interview Summary

A telephonic interview occurred between the undersigned, Murrell Blackburn, Examiner Cindy Nguyen, and Primary Examiner Frantz Coby on Wednesday, October 12, 2005. The interview covered the rejection to claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hita et al., U.S. Patent No. 6081774 (hereinafter Hita) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5995921 to Richards (hereinafter Richards).

The undersigned pointed out to the Examiners that Applicants' amended independent claim 1 recites (1) searching a database containing a plurality of help utilities provided to the database by all of a plurality of different computer operating systems wherein the plurality of help utilities assist a user in utilizing the plurality of different computer operating systems. In contrast, Hita discloses that an information retrieval system may be used with a variety of software applications, word processors, text editors, or other programs that are capable of producing a natural-language database of help information. (See Hita, column 7, lines 4-10). The undersigned pointed out that the cited section of Hita is not referring to computer operating systems because operating systems alone do not create or produce a natural-language database of help information.

Examiner Nguyen pointed out in column 9, lines 35-39, Hita states that operating system 220 or 260 controls the execution of other computer software programs, such as NLIH SDK 140. And in column 7, lines 28-31, Hita states that NLIH SDK 140 linguistically and syntactically analyses help project 114 to produce a binary database index 130 and associated user files 135. The Examiner submitted that because one or the other operating system controls the execution of a software program that produces a database index and user files, Hita discloses help utilities provided to the database by a plurality of different computer operating systems wherein the

plurality of help utilities assist a user in utilizing the plurality of different computer operating systems.

The undersigned disagreed and stated that only one or the other operating system controlling execution of a software program that produces a database index and user files does not read on a plurality of different computer operating systems providing help utilities to a database as recited in amended claim 1. Still further, Hita does not disclose wherein the plurality of help utilities provided assist a user in utilizing the plurality of different computer operating systems.

Thus, Hita in view of Richards does not teach or suggest Applicants' amended claim 1. The Examiner indicated that the amendment would likely require a new search. Specifically, the Examiner indicated that the arguments made by the undersigned have merit, however additional limitations, examination, and/or search is still required. This written response is thus, submitted in follow-up to the telephonic interview for consideration by the Examiner, as it is believed to have placed the application in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 101

Claims 1-4, 6-11, 25-28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter. Independent claims 1, 10, 11, and 25 have been amended to clarify the application, involvement, use, and/or advancement of the technological arts and the production of useful, concrete, and tangible results. Thus, the amended claims are directed to statutory subject matter.

At least because claims 2-4, 6-9, and 26-28 inherit the language of amended independent claims 1 and 25 respectively, claims 2-4, 6-9, and 26-28 are also directed to statutory subject matter.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

Claims 1-4, 6-18, 20-28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over de Hita et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,081,774 (hereinafter Hita) in view of Richards et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,995,921 (hereinafter Richards). Applicants respectfully submit that Hita in view of Richards does not teach or suggest each and every feature of Applicants' claimed invention as recited in independent claims 1, 10-12, 16, 20 and 25.

Claim 1

Applicants' claimed invention as recited in amended claim 1 is drawn to a computer-implemented method of searching for a help utility. The method comprises, among other features, searching a database containing a plurality of help utilities provided to the database by all of a plurality of different computer operating systems wherein the plurality of help utilities assist a user in utilizing the plurality of different computer operating systems. In contrast, Hita discloses an information retrieval system for retrieving information from a database in response to natural language queries. The database, as disclosed in Hita, contains help text files that provide a user with information to assist in the operation of an associated software program, a single associated software program 112. It is very clear from Hita, that the software developer 110 develops the help project 114 and that the help text files are not provided to the database by the associated single software program, but by the developer 110. (See Hita, column 6, lines 46-58). Even the help project 114 example of the Windows help system, disclosed in Hita, was created using Microsoft Help Workshop, but there is no evidence that the help text files for this Windows help system were provided to the database by all of a plurality of different computer operating systems, as recited in amended claim 1. There is also no indication that the help text files assist a user in utilizing a plurality of different computer operating systems.

In further contrast, Hita also discloses the information retrieval system 199 may be used with a variety of software applications for developing help information. Applicants interpret this to mean that the retrieval system may not only be used with the Microsoft Help Workshop, but other software applications in place of Microsoft Help Workshop, but not in conjunction with Microsoft Help Workshop. Even if use with a variety of software applications was interpreted to mean in conjunction with other software applications, the variety of software applications used for developing the help information are not the software application 112 with which the help project 112 assists users in operating. Compatibility with a variety of software applications to develop help information does not disclose, teach or suggest use of help utilities provided to a database or help project 114 by a plurality of software applications per help project. Hita only contemplates assisting with the operation of a single software application per help project. See Hita, Figs. 1-3 (112), column 5, lines 57-59, column 6, lines 17-19, 27-30, 40-41, and 46-52, and column 7, lines 37-42).

Also, Hita states that the retrieval system may be used with a variety of word processors, text editors, or other programs that are capable of producing a natural-language database of help information. The Office Action cites column 6, line 66- column 7, lines 1-27 of Hita in support of asserting that Hita discloses searching help utilities provided to a database by a plurality of different operating systems. Applicants respectfully disagree and assert that using the retrieval system with programs that are capable of producing a database does not teach or suggest that all of a plurality of different computer operating systems provide the help utilities to a database, as recited in amended claim 1. Operating systems may contain help information that can be added to a database, but alone, operating systems are not programs that are "capable of producing a natural language database", such as Microsoft Help Workshop. The "such programs" referred to in Hita, include, programs used to present information in rich text format or programs used to create data files in Hyper-Text Markup Language (HTML) for presentation. Thus, this cited section (column 6, line 66- column 7, lines 1-27) of Hita does not support the assertion that Hita discloses searching help utilities provided to a single help project 114 by a plurality of different operating systems.

The operating systems disclosed in Hita interface in a "well known manner". Applicants assert that Hita does not disclose anywhere, computer operating systems that are capable of providing help utilities to a database where the help utilities assist a user in utilizing the plurality of different operating systems. (See Hita Fig. 2 (220 and 260) and column 9, lines 20-47). Operating systems may include help utilities, however, computer operating systems alone are not "programs capable of producing a natural language database of help information." None of the text files in help project 114 embodiments, as disclosed in Hita, are provided by an operating system, let alone by a plurality of different computer operating systems. Thus, neither Hita or Richards alone, or in combination, teach or suggest searching a database containing a plurality of help utilities provided to the database by all of a plurality of different computer operating systems to assist a user in utilizing the plurality of different computer operating systems as recited in amended claim 1. Therefore amended claim 1 is allowable over Hita in view of Richards.

Claims 10-11

Applicants' claimed invention, as recited in amended claims 10 and 11, is drawn to a computer-implemented method of searching for a function wizard. The method recited in claim 10 comprises, among other features, (1) searching a database containing a plurality of wizards according to the search keywords wherein the plurality of wizards includes wizards provided to the database by different computer operating systems to assist a user in utilizing the different computer operating systems. The method recited in claim 11 comprises, among other features, (1) providing a database containing a plurality of functions wherein the plurality of functions includes functions provided to the database from a variety of computer operating systems to assist a user in utilizing the variety of computer operating systems and functions provided to the database from a variety of computer software applications and (2) initiating a search within the database for a function wizard matching one of the plurality of functions based on the search terms whereby the search of the database yields function wizards across different operating systems.

As described above with respect to amended claim 1, Hita does not teach or suggest searching or providing a database containing wizards provided to the database from different computer operating systems to assist a user in utilizing the different computer operating systems. Richards does not cure this deficiency in Hita. Thus, Applicants' amended claims 10-11 are also allowable over Hita in view of Richards.

Claim 12

Applicants' claimed invention, as recited in amended claim 12, is drawn to a computer readable medium having stored thereon computer-executable instructions which when executed by a computer perform, among other features, the steps of (1) inputting one or more search keywords directed to one of a plurality of help utilities, (2) searching a database containing the plurality of help utilities including help utilities provided to the database by a plurality of different computer operating systems that are connected in a network to assist a user in utilizing the different computer operating systems, and (3) if after the step of searching the database, no help utility is found matching the keywords but a related help utility is found that closely approximates the keywords, then displaying the related help utility.

As described above with respect to amended claim 1, Hita does not teach or suggest searching a database containing help utilities provided to the database by a plurality of different computer operating systems that are connected in a network to assist a user in utilizing the different computer operating systems. Richards does not cure this deficiency in Hita. Still further, the Office Action cites column 39, lines 10-43 in support of asserting that Hita discloses if no help utility is found matching the keywords but a related help utility is found that closely approximates the keywords, then displaying the related help utility. Applicants respectfully disagree and assert that the purpose of the query-index matcher 420 of Hita is to match weighted query keyword index 1820 with binary database index. In Hita, unless a match is found, no portion of the help project 114 that is most closely related to the natural language query 160 is selected. Thus, a match is required in Hita in order to select a portion of the help project that is closely related to the query. (See Hita, column 39, lines 1-26). Also, only a location of the portion of the help project is provided when a match is found, the portion is not displayed according to Hita. (See Hita, column 39, lines 37-40).

In contrast, Applicants' claim 12 requires no match between keywords and help utilities in order to display the related help utility. Related help utilities of Applicants' claim 12 do not match keywords, the related help utilities closely approximate keywords, thus no match is required. Thus, Applicants' amended claim 12 is also allowable over Hita in view of Richards.

Claim 16

Applicants' claimed invention, as recited in claim 16, is drawn to a system for searching for a help utility. The system comprises a computer program module operative, among other features, (1) to provide a utility search dialog, (2) to input one or more search terms directed to one of a plurality of help utilities wherein each help utility is provided to a database by a different operating system to assist a user in utilizing that operating system, (3) to search the database containing the plurality of help utilities, and (4) if after the step of searching the database, no help utility is found matching at least one of the search terms but a related help utility is found that closely approximates the search terms, to display the related help utility.

As described above with respect to amended claims 1 and 12, Hita and Richards are deficient with respect to disclosing searching a database containing help utilities provided to the database by different operating systems and displaying a related help utility that closely

approximates the keywords when a match is not found as recited in Applicants' claim 16. Thus, claim 16 is also allowable over Hita in view of Richards.

Claim 20

Applicants' claimed invention, as recited in claim 20, is drawn to a computer readable medium having stored thereon computer-executable instructions which when executed by a computer perform, among other features, the steps of (1) receiving search keywords directed to at least one help utility, (2) searching a plurality of help utilities across a variety of computer operating systems, and (3) if after the step of searching the plurality of help utilities, no help utility is found matching the keywords but a related help utility that closely approximates the keywords is found, then displaying the related help utility.

As described above with respect to amended claim 1, Hita only discloses searching a topic index associated with help information for a single software application. Also, neither the text nor Figs. 1-3 of Hita indicates that help utilities are searched via a network across a variety of operating systems or anything else except the help project 114. Thus, Hita does not teach or suggest (2) searching a plurality of help utilities across a variety of computer operating systems as recited in amended claim 20.

Further, as described above with respect to amended claim 12, Hita and Richards are deficient with respect to disclosing displaying a related help utility that closely approximates the keywords when a match is not found as recited in Applicants' claim 20. Thus, claim 20 is also allowable over Hita in view of Richards.

Claim 25

Applicants' claimed invention, as recited in amended claim 25, is drawn to a computer-implemented method for searching and managing a plurality of help utilities. The method comprises, among other features, the steps of (1) receiving a search keyword directed to a help utility, (2) in response to receiving the search keyword, searching the plurality of help utilities across a plurality of computer operating systems and a plurality of computer software applications; and (3) finding a help utility matching the keywords.

As described above with respect to amended claims 1 and 20, Hita only discloses searching a topic index associated with help information for a single software application.

Richards cannot satisfy the deficiencies of Hita. Thus, Applicants' amended claim 25 is also allowable over Hita in view of Richards.

Dependent Claims 2-4, 6-9, 13-15, 17-18, and 21-24, and 26-28

At least because claims 2-4, 6-9, and 24 inherit the language of independent claim 1, claims 13-15 inherit the language of independent claim 12, and claims 17-18 inherit the language of independent claim 16; Applicants respectfully submit that claims 2-4, 6-9, 13-15, and 17-18 are also allowable over Hita in view of Richards for at least this reason.

Further, at least because claims 21-23 inherit the language of independent claim 20 and claims 26-28 inherit the language of independent claim 25, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 21-23 and 26-28 are also allowable over Hita in view of Richards for at least this reason also.


CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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